CHOICES

THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT MAGAZINE

September 2005

Special Interview with the Chairman of the Group of 77, Ambassador Munir Mbanefo

Fighting Poverty: From Policy to Grassroots

Uganda's Brave Fight Against Poverty and AIDS

Viet Nam: The Villagers of Tra Vinh

Kyrgyzstan's Goal: Reducing Poverty

Indonesia: Hope in the Midst of Crisis

Building a Stronger Future: Benin, Mozambique, Nicaragua

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CHOICES

Volume 9 Number 3

CHOICES

THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT MAGAZINE

COMMENTARY

Meeting the Challenge of Poverty 4
By Mark Malloch Brown

INTERVIEW

Ambassador Arthur C.I. Mbanefo, MFR
Chairman of the Group of 77,
Speaks on Development Challenges 5
By Aileen Farnsworth

ESSAY

Insecurity Leads to Poverty 8
By Stephen Browne

DEVELOPMENT WORKS

Uganda's Brave Fight Against Poverty and AIDS 9
By Stephen Ndaula
Viet Nam: The Villagers of Tai Vinh 12
By Philip Jones Griffiths
Mozambique's Plight Moves International Donors 15
By Peggy Osborn
Indonesia: Hope in the Midst of Crisis 16
By Lotte Engemen
Benin's Battle with Poverty 18
By Paul Mecy
Nicaragua's Recovery from Disaster 20
By Judy Butler
Kyrgyzstan's Goal: Reducing Poverty 22
By Geir Lange Sørnes

NOTEBOOK

Being There 24
Democracy and Poverty: Are they Interlinked? 25
Nobel Laureate Explores the Dimensions of Poverty 26
A Gateway to Information on Poverty 26
Facing the Challenges of the New Century 27

MATTERS OF FACT 28

COMMENTARY

MARK MALLOCH BROWN

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF POVERTY

A

INTERVIEW

By Ashall Varma

What do you consider to be the most critical challenges facing developing countries in the new Millennium?

With the decline in ODA what must developing countries do to be able to meet their development goals?

Developing countries fear that humanitarian needs will divert funds from their development needs. What is your opinion on this?

Perhaps the donors feel that with more transparency, more accountability, it would be easier for them to convince their taxpayers to increase the level of ODA.

Ambassador ARTHUR C.I. MBANEFO, MFR

What in your view should be the role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the 21st Century?

One of the reasons UNDP is providing policy advice and strengthening developing country institutions is because it feels that this will have a greater impact on poverty reduction at the grassroots level. What is your opinion on this?

But isn't that what UNDP is doing: giving upstream policy advice and linking it to programmes at the grassroots level?

What do you think it will take to level the playing field between the North and the South in trade, technology and the digital divide?

INTERVIEW

The HIV AIDS pandemic is wiping out the widespread progress of many countries. What do you think the international community and national governments should do to curb the progression of this deadly disease?

As chief of the Group of 77, what do you hope will be achieved at the Millennium Summit?

In addition, I feel that the Security Council needs to be more open. It needs to be reformed and democratized. I feel that a continent like Africa should have a permanent seat on the Security Council and also Asia. Granted that China is there, but China is more or less accustomed by itself. India is also a continent by itself. When all these big chunks of the world are not on the Security Council as a permanent seat, it becomes difficult to talk about peace and stability. So

INSECURITY LEADS TO POVERTY

by Stephen Brown

Renegade Northwest Records

Rachael Bubolo, a widow with eight children, now raises pigs with a loan from an NGO that receives financial assistance from UNDP.

UGANDA'S BRAVE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND AIDS

Text and photos by
Stephen Shames

Busiita, Uganda—Remote and picturesque, the town of Busiita sits high in the mountains along twisting, dirt roads. It is easy to forget that AIDS also traveled these roads leaving Rachael Bubolo, a widow with eight children to feed—four of her own and four stepchildren. Desperate for help, Bubolo joined a group set up by the Uganda Women Concern Ministry. The founder, Edith Wakumire, had started support services for families affected by HIV/AIDS. For her work she received the *Race Against Poverty Award* from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1998.

Wakumire explains the importance of economic development in the fight against HIV/AIDS: "If someone is suffering with AIDS, all family resources are sold for the sick person. That is why we are focusing on community development in relation to HIV/AIDS."

"AIDS and poverty go hand in hand. They are twins."
—EDITH WAKUMIRE

From Wakumire's organization, Bubolo received a US$33 loan to purchase pigs. She also used part of the loan to buy bananas and sell them at a profit in Mbale, one of the larger cities in Uganda. Bubolo says, "Out of the profit I buy feed for the pigs, keep some for capital and use the rest for food and school fees for my children." Since AIDS is still considered a shameful disease, Bubolo helps sick women talk about it and persuades them to join women's groups where they receive help.

Efforts like this are being repeated all over Uganda, a country devastated by HIV/AIDS. Uganda has an estimated 1.9 million AIDS orphans and approximately 10 percent of Uganda's adult population is HIV infected. But today, Uganda is one of the few African countries where the HIV infection rate has gone down because the government dealt

◂ Edith Wakumire, the founder of the Uganda Women Concern Ministry, speaking to an AIDS orphan.

Adite Ann Margaret (far left) sells ground nuts in the market. She expanded her business with loans and training provided by UWESO.

▸ Simon Omongole (left) received training through UWESO's apprenticeship programme.

with the AIDS crisis openly and in a structured way, becoming a model for other nations battling poverty and AIDS.

"People have come from over 50 countries to see how we responded on the ground," says Dr. David Kihumuro Apuuli, Director-General of the Uganda AIDS Commission.

Describing the government's role, Dr. Apuuli said, "President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni went on the offensive and talked about issues that are usually only talked about in the bedroom. In 1986 the AIDS Control programme was established. We have mainstreamed HIV/AIDS in the budget with our Poverty Eradication Action Plan so we can increase the capacity of local authorities to deal with AIDS and make the orphan crisis our top priority."

Dr. Apuuli added that the international community, including UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Bank provided resources from the beginning of the crisis and worked with the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

From 1995-1997 under the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Poverty Reduction Programme, UNDP provided technical and financial assistance of $12.6 million to Ugandan government agencies, including the Uganda AIDS Commission and NGOs such as the National Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (NACWOLA), Uganda Woman's Effort to Save Orphans (UWESO), Uganda Women Concern Ministry, Salem Brotherhood, World Vision, and Nsambya Hospital. "Some of the programme funds were used for micro projects that created capacity in the community, generated income for caretakers of orphans, and provided them with skills," says Sam Ibanda, UNDP's Assistant Resident Representative.

Giving families living with AIDS a life

Based in Kampala, Uganda's capital, NACWOLA, has become a valuable source of support to women and families living with AIDS. "When NACWOLA started it was invisible, silent and easy to ignore. It was just women living with HIV," says Beatrice Weré, its director. "With UNDP funding, we bought our first computer and we were able to create awareness of HIV/AIDS in the community and to raise our profile. Working with a credible organization like UNDP attracted support from other donors such as Save the Children Fund, the United States Agency for International Development, Global Fund for Women and the Norwegian Counsel for Africa."

NACWOLA gives loans to groups of women to create income-generating activities. "It is a revolving fund," explains Weré. "The group is a mechanism to ensure supervision and accountability. Before we give a group money we run a seminar on project planning, marketing and management to identify the right project for them."

In addition to micro enterprise, NACWOLA started the Memory Project, where women compile family histories for their children. "As mothers living with HIV, we were not telling our children that we were going to die, the children were the last to know and it was very traumatizing for them. It was difficult to make plans for the future of our children. So we started the Memory Project," says Weré.

"Even if I die, my children will know where they come from," says Hajati Hadija Namutebi, who has HIV/AIDS, and is the mother of seven children. "I took them to their villages to see their relatives. The Memory Book keeps it alive. They show it to their friends. Every

UNITING AGAINST AIDS IN AFRICA

Uganda's HIV/AIDS programmes are an excellent example of successful partnerships between government, the international community and civil society. They demonstrate how political will is critical for the effective implementation of programmes and partnerships. In the early 1990s, the infection rate in Uganda was 14 percent. Today, it is eight percent.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan wants to exemplify such partnerships through his initiative, the International Partnership Against AIDS in Africa (IPAA). Launched in December 1999, IPAA is being administered by UNAIDS—the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

The momentum of support for this initiative has increased sharply since the beginning of the new Millennium as the issue of HIV/AIDS has emerged at the forefront of the global policy debate. In January 2000, US Ambassador to the United Nations Richard C. Holbrooke, as chair of the first session of the UN Security Council, broadened the definition of HIV/AIDS to a serious health issue that adversely impacts on world security. During the same session, Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and then-Chairman of UNAIDS, said that HIV/AIDS is also a development issue.

John Demsey, President of MAC Cosmetics (a division of the Estee Lauder Company) donated US$500,000 to the Communications Office of UNDP in February, to help build an awareness campaign on HIV/AIDS in Africa, and to help generate resources. The outcome was the creation of a Working Group on HIV/AIDS in Africa consisting of more than 30 individuals from the private sector, NGOs and the entertainment, sports and media arenas.

On 27 March 2000, the Working Group met to develop a strategy to support UNAIDS and the principles of the IPAA. By working within their individual spheres of influence and collaborating with one another, they are focusing on reducing HIV infection rates in persons 15 to 24 years of age by 25 percent in the most affected countries before the year 2005. In addition, they hope their efforts will contribute to the development of national plans of action to address the growing number of AIDS orphans.

Some of the activities that have already taken place and others being planned in

Thursday my children go to a club at NACWOLA, so the kids have friends—a support network."

Caring for orphans

Virtually every family in Uganda is caring for an orphan. "I have three biological children but there are six children in my household and I pay school fees for another 10 kids," says Dr. Apuuli. "Here, it is not a choice. The day after the funeral of my brother's son, I began taking care of two of his children. We always assumed the extended family would take care of the orphans but the system is overburdened."

Pelucy Ntambirweki, director of UWESO says, "Dealing with HIV/AIDS without dealing with the orphans leaves a gap. They need lots of attention, and it takes years for them to get over the loss of their parents. And it takes a lot of resources to sustain them until they are 18. We try and empower families to look after orphans."

In the small town of Arturtur, north of Kampala, UWESO has dispersed more than $1 million in loans since 1996 to many families stricken with the disease.

Sam Ogel, a 17-year-old says, "After my father died, we had little to eat. At times we did without supper and breakfast." His mother, Janet Borei, who looks after her seven and her brother's two children, used her loan to open a restaurant.

"We go deep into rural areas and help families form income-generating groups. We also train orphans. We offer artisan and vocational training," says Ntambirweki.

Simon Omongole, an 18-year-old, is a carpenter at the Motis & Tenon Workshop in Mukura. "My father died in 1991, and there was no money for school. When my older brother went to Kampala to work with an uncle, I became head of the family. There was no way of getting money except digging cassava and potatoes," he says.

Edith Wakumire visiting an extended family affected by HIV/AIDS.

"UWESO recruited me for their apprenticeship programme. Now I work here and take care of my two younger sisters and myself. I can pay their school fees. I even bought a bicycle and two oxen. I hire the oxen out to earn cash. My life has changed," says Omongole.

Lives are changing but the "twin" problems facing Uganda—HIV/AIDS and poverty remain. "Uganda has done a lot on AIDS," says Dauda Toure, UNDP Resident Representative. "But we cannot be complacent. It is still there, having a terrible effect. UNDP should continue to take an active role in providing support—within the UNAIDS context and our programmes—to mainstream the HIV issue."

Poverty reduction is the key. The Government of Uganda is committed to reducing the incidence of absolute poverty to 10 percent and relative poverty to 30 percent of the total population by 2017.

In a recent address, President Museveni stated, "AIDS continues to cause many deaths among the most productive members of our society and is increasing the number of children who become orphaned, threatening to wipe out the development achievements of recent years. It is imperative that HIV/AIDS remains as the highest priority on the security, development and political agenda of Uganda and all the countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa." ■

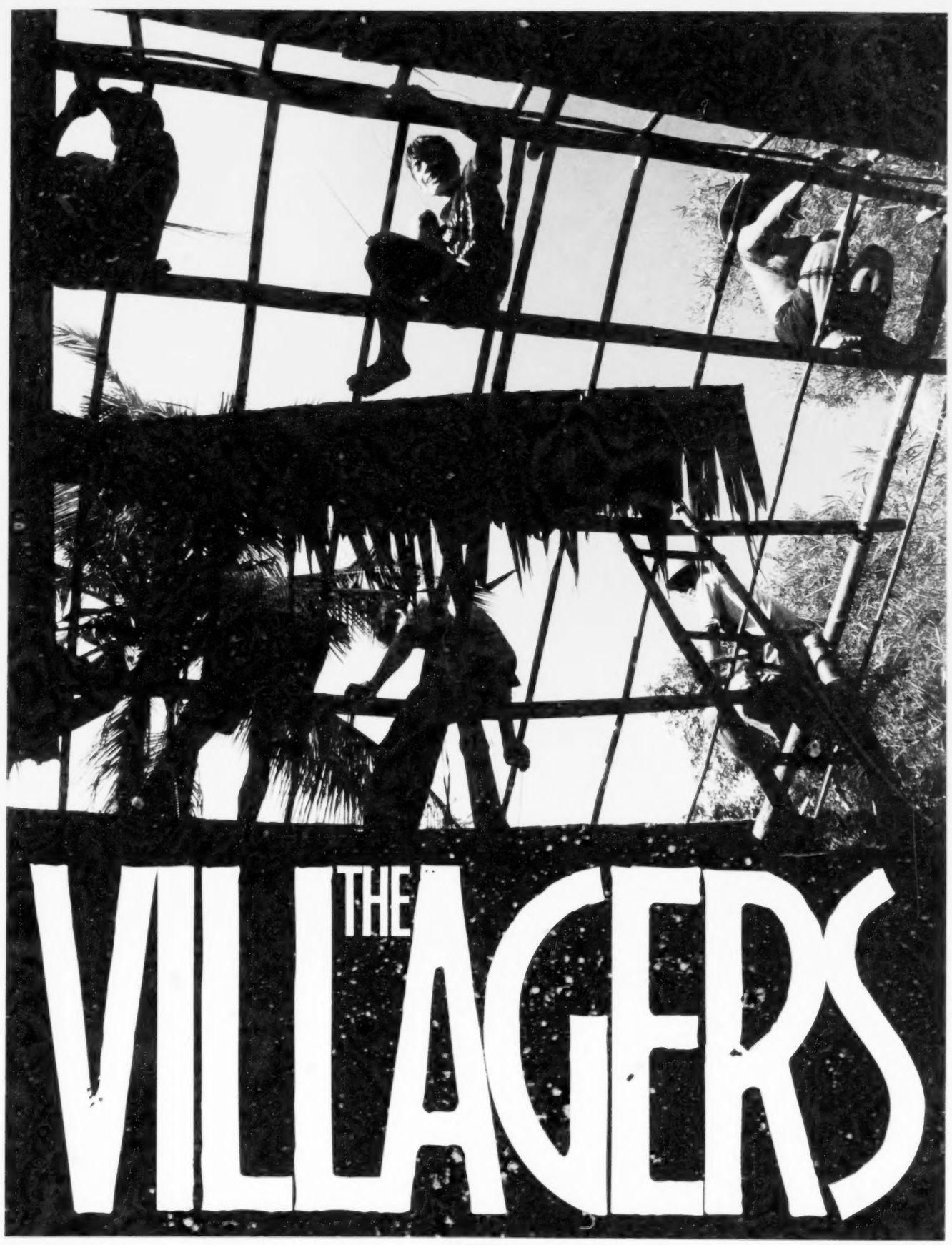
Stephen Shames is a photojournalist and author of two books: Outside the Dream *and* Pursuing the Dream. *He is currently working on a project on AIDS orphans.*

support of these goals are:

- Public Service Announcements by UNDP Youth Emissary and Atlanta Hawks Basketball Player Dikembe Mutombo are being broadcast worldwide through the Voice of America.
- Involvement of Baaba Maal, a Senegalese musician to disseminate information to youth about HIV/AIDS through his concert tours in rural West Africa.
- An event on 24 June 2000, entitled "Love Heals" to raise awareness about the AIDS crisis in Africa and in the African-American communities in the United States through music, inspiration and poetry. Performers included UNDP's Goodwill Ambassador Danny Glover, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Alice Walker and the East Bay Church Religious Science Gospel Choir in Oakland, California.
- At the 13th International AIDS Conference in Durban, South Africa (9-14 July 2000) UNDP Goodwill Ambassadors Danny Glover and Nadine Gordimer and Youth Emissary Dikembe Mutombo took part in a Global Health Council panel discussion on Building Partnerships for AIDS awareness. As a result, Danny Glover was invited to address the US Congress and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee about the Durban conference (26 July 2000).
- Commemoration of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty through the annual "Race Against Poverty" awards ceremony organized by UNDP in New York, on 23 October 2000. This year's focus highlights HIV/AIDS as a poverty issue.
- Musical events to highlight the involvement of Africa in the fight against HIV/AIDS will include the Kora All Africa Music Awards ceremony to be held in Sun City, South Africa on 18 November 2000. Musicians from this awards ceremony will perform free at the *One Billion Against AIDS Benefit Concert* hosted by singer Miriam Makeba in Pretoria, South Africa on 19 November 2000. Proceeds from the benefit concert will support HIV/AIDS programmes in South Africa and also other African countries through the United Nations.

Get involved in the global movement to fight HIV/AIDS. E-mail us at: goodwill@undp.org

—*By Dorothy Davis and Ginia Pati.*


THE
VILLAGERS

OF TRA VINH

Text and photos by Phillip Jones Griffiths

Fisherman harvesting shrimp at Duyen Hai hatchery.

THE VILLAGERS OF TRA VINH

Women attend a group meeting in Tri Phong village.

MOZAMBIQUE'S PLIGHT MOVES INTERNATIONAL DONORS

By Trygve Olfarnes

Xai Xai, Mozambique – When

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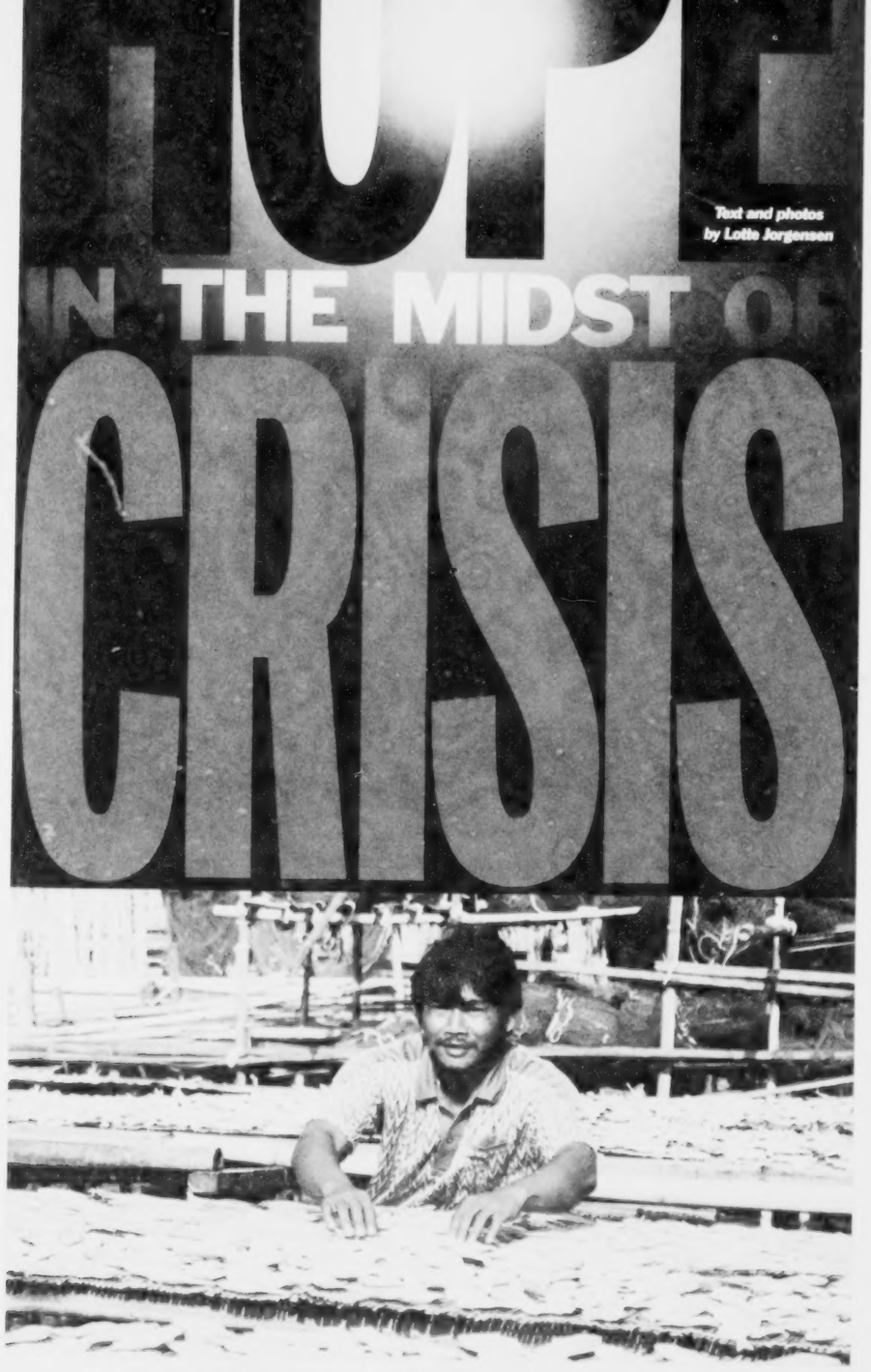
HOPE IN THE MIDST OF CRISIS

Text and photos by Lotte Jorgensen



Perbaungan, Indonesia – Antoni was in his prime when disaster struck. Aged 35, he was the father of four children, the eldest of whom was only 12. He was the breadwinner of the family, and the owner of a small fishing boat. He was also the only one in the family who knew how to fish.

Then, one Sunday night in March 1997, Antoni went out to sea as he had done countless times before. He never returned. His boat was found the next day, capsized and empty, by a passing fishing vessel. Antoni's body was never found.

Living in the small fishing community of Perbaungan on the northeastern coast of Sumatra, and fishing on prawns in the Straits of Malacca, was Antoni's life until the accident. Fights with commercial fisheries fleets over fishing grounds are a growing problem in Indonesia, leaving small traditional fishermen at the losing end.

After the accident from which Antoni never really recovered, his wife, Sadina, gradually took over responsibility for supporting the family. However, making roof tops out of palm leaves and collecting clams on the beach for the local market provided very little money. "Everybody made roof tops and collected clams, so the prices dropped considerably," says Rahma, a neighbour who lost her husband in the same accident.

Microcredit with a difference

Channeling development assistance through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is a novelty in Indonesia. In late 1997, a severe economic and social crisis hit Indonesia, leaving millions of people out of work or unable to afford even basic necessities. The number of those below the poverty line rose from 11 to 24 percent by the end of 1998. They swamped traditional coping mechanisms, and the government's new social safety net proved inadequate.

The international community, appalled by the reversal of Indonesia's economic growth, was anxious to invest in programme to bring about real change and grassroots empowerment. Indonesia's traditionally strong central government was in disarray after the fall of President Suharto, thus opening the door to the kind of local NGOs and citizen's advocacy groups that had previously been excluded from real power in Indonesia.

Arifin never recovered fully from the traumatizing experience when his boat went down with four of his friends.

Introducing good governance through civil society

Fisherman Ahmad feels very lucky having a boat from the program because then are flowed.

BENIN'S BATTLE WITH

POVERTY

Text and photos by Paul Melly

Matchore, Benin — When the farmers of Matchore, in south-eastern Benin, made their first week-long trek to a literacy class where they gather in a bee-hived hut to study all day,

Now, six years on, the villagers can read and write their own names. Outside the village, they have managed to double their rice yields and triple the size of their cassava crop. And it's not just the men who've gained literacy skills. "Our husbands are happy to see us getting on in the literacy classes," says Esozime Dossa, a full-posted woman who, like several of the women in the class, is considerably younger than her husband.

However, there is little to celebrate in the fact that Benin is one of the world's poorest countries, with around half of its population living below the poverty line. Since the country's economic crisis began in the mid-1980s, the government has had to cut back on spending in all areas, including education and health. Benin's debt is the highest in the world in relation to the size of its economy, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has described the country as one of the least developed in the world.

"Empowerment—the access to knowledge and bargaining power—is fundamental to escape from extreme poverty."

From policy to the grassroots

Creating an impact on livelihoods

A child being treated for burns at the Fombawi health centre.

Women and children preparing groundnut paste snacks for sale.

Reaching out to many more

NICARAGUA'S

By Judy Butler

People from the community unloading concrete bricks from a truck.

El Derrumbado, Nicaragua — Hurricane Mitch, which crossed Honduras and mountainous northern Nicaragua in late October 1998, brought devastation and suffering to thousands of people. Under a week of torrential rain, roads washed away and entire hillsides collapsed, while swollen rivers swallowed up adjacent communities and farmland then spread on downhill and inundated the lowlands. Nicaragua's two major lakes, miles from each other, filled until they became one. Carmelo Angulo, who lives in the craggy mountain municipality of Dipilto on the border with Honduras, tells of a sound like TNT detonations — it was the raging local rivers, battling against boulders and each other.

Thirty percent of Nicaragua's 4.5 million people lost homes, loved ones, livelihoods or some combination. As often happens with natural disasters, those hit hardest were the poor, whose flimsy, ill-constructed houses usually were the first to go.

Hence El Derrumbado, a community of 51 families on a steep hillside in Managua, that epitomized that precariousness. The three houses were built on a steep, deforested hill, and when the hill gave way, it took part of her house with it. Ruiz headed for higher ground and ended up trapped by water. Sleeping for days on wet ground, she developed a back problem that paralyzed her legs. The US$350 the doctor says she needs for surgery is a fortune beyond her dreams.

Coordinating efforts to rebuild lives

One silver lining in this national tragedy was the overwhelming generosity of individuals and organizations around the world. Thanks largely to the broad vision on coordinating efforts by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), part of that solidarity response was parlayed into more than the sum of its parts. As a result, Carmelo Angulo and Hilaria Ruiz are among thousands of Mitch victims whose communities are being rebuilt with many improvements.

"Now our houses are made of brick and [illegible] and we don't worry about [illegible]," says Ruiz, pointing to a rail her brother built outside so she can stand, "it's not going anywhere." El Derrumbado's 51 families have all built such houses and a big meeting hall-cum-school along a winding dirt road in the safe new location. Soon they will have latrines, running water and fruit trees.

UNDP's two-year rehabilitation project got underway immediately after the hurricane with $1.2 million of its own funds. Its objective was to help municipal governments and victims themselves in the hard-hit north rebuild their small, outlying, virtually unassisted communities. Most of the beneficiaries are the poorest of the poor, like those in El Derrumbado, who are subsistence farmers, and in Dipilto, where most work for under $2 a day on neighboring coffee plantations.

The project's counterpart is the central government's Municipal Development Institute (INIFOM), but UNDP saw the value of pooling efforts with the dozen non-governmental organizations (NGOs) already working in 35 selected municipalities. All had some reconstruction funding, but were working in isolation, and the municipal governments had no resources to do an overall damage assessment or any pre-investment planning. Lack of reliable data combined with the urgency presaged a chaotic approach full of good will, but also of avoidable gaps and overlaps.

Coordination may seem a small accomplishment to an outsider, recognizes Carmelo Angulo, UNDP's Resident Representative in Nicaragua, but he stresses its importance. "Mitch hit hardest in what had been a war zone for over a decade, and reconciliation is still incomplete between the once-revolutionary local organizations, the peasants and a government they view as an adversary. Working together to deal with the emergency was a meaningful experience that taught us all a lot."

"We formed a partnership chain," says Angulo. "In each place, the group with the strongest presence and best knowledge of local materials implemented the project there and others chipped in their funds."

The unprecedented alliance attracted more funding. In addition to the nearly $900,000 from national and international NGOs, the Government of Finland provided over $900,000 and other UN agencies about $800,000 for a first-year total of nearly $4 million.

Beneficiaries building their houses.

RECOVERY FROM DISASTER

Eucebio Roque Martinez, the local mayor outside the ruins of his former house.

In a survey done by volunteer university students of the affected communities, the priorities, not surprisingly, were housing, reactivation of production and basic social services, such as drinking water. A seed bank was set up for subsistence farmers whose land had not been ruined and many women were provided with chickens as revolving credits to be paid to neighbours. The big ticket item, however, was housing—half of UNDP's budget alone. When the project finishes this year, with an additional budget of nearly $3.3 million for the year 2000, some 3,000 homes will have been built in 142 communities, benefiting about 18,000 victims.

According to UNDP project coordinator Marcelo Ochoa, the "artistic part" was bringing together so many contractors, the state water utility, INFOMUNICIPIO workers, community leaders and beneficiaries to hammer out plans and coordinate implementation. "Some only had money for roof corner posts and a tin roof," says Ochoa, "but by pooling funds all the beneficiaries got decent houses. Consensus on construction methods ensured uniformly high standards."

Hot lunches, chosen on a need basis with single mothers and the elderly at the head of the line, were introduced as a group and their trash or real living styles were incorporated into the final home designs. "Those lines were underscoring room corridors gave us the people's suggestion," explained Iran Carlos Alanis of Grupo Nexos, the NGO overseeing construction of the new communities and Digna Nexos.

"My family got [the] help [of the] Red Cross [and] we had four weeks

sessions. In Dipilto Nuevo the Red Cross is providing latrines and the 32 beneficiary families are now digging ditches for water pipes—women alongside men. "Each house will have its own running water!" exclaims Marlene Antonia Taiando, looking up from her stint on the ditch brigade. The bright-eyed young woman is still thrilled by the very idea.

Organizational skills are key

San Juanillo and neighbouring Las Delicias farm communities along the Rio Grande de Matagalpa have more going for them than the isolated communities further north. They are closer to the highway and markets, have better health and education levels, and both had the wisdom to elect hands-on, hard-nosed women local auxiliary mayors who knew how to galvanize people's energies. San Juanillo's chunky 65-year-old Eucebio Roque Martinez, shaved his mestizo under-chinny beard, wears a cattle rancher's hat and is quick to credit organizational skills.

tive small children—up and lashed them to the branches and each other. They were rescued after four days.

Organizational skills like Martinez's are invaluable to the project since local leaders help ensure that the work advances on schedule and everyone shares the burden equally. "In my community we know we can fight for what we need if we're organized," he says, "if not we won't get anything."

Gender awareness is a cross-cutting theme in the project, in addition to environmental concerns and local participation. Land ownership is an issue that directly affects women. Property in Nicaragua is traditionally in a man's name, leaving women and children destitute when death or common-law separations occur. But these houses will be deeded to the woman or family of the couple and never be passed on to the children.

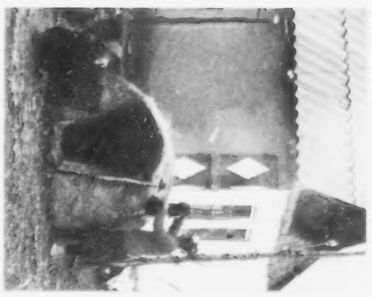
In 1999, UNDP, the Government of Nicaragua and Habitat promoted a new law which aimed at linking the financial capital of investors to the social capital of communities in the rural sector. This programme helped define policies for decent housing in the rural sector and create conditions for sustainable development.

Many lessons were learned after Hurricane Mitch, perhaps the most important one was how to lessen the impact of future natural disasters on the most vulnerable. Angulo is enthusiastic about groundbreaking disaster prevention, mitigation and management legislation that Nicaragua has just passed with advice from UNDP. "Mitch taught us that the human hand causes vulnerability as much as nature, and with this new law and the structure to be built to act on it, everyone—right down to the communities—will be made more aware of the need to reduce risks." ■

KYRGYZSTAN'S GOAL: Reducing Poverty

By Gerd Ursyn Swanson

Issyk-Kul Valley, Kyrgyzstan



Village Kyzyl Oi: A woman bakes bread the traditional way.

"Empowering the poor through information, training, confidence – building and facilitation of local development activities cannot be overrated in the effort to alleviate poverty."

Miners turn farmers

The southern Kyrgyz mining town of Kok Jangak (population 40,000) advertises itself as a prosperous company town with its dazzling industrial plant at the centre of all economic and social activity.

Here, the lead and coal miners – that according to Deputy Mayor Asanaly Akmatov are the best coal miners in the world – have almost stopped production. The annual output in 1991 was 500,000 tonnes. Today it is a mere 29,000 tonnes. One-third of the population, mainly of Russian origin, have left. Though never engaged in farming activities before, the Kyrgyz miners have now turned to raising cattle. Self-Help Groups in the town have received their second credit to buy young bulls, sunflower seeds and potatoes. The distributed training apartments are being used for exhibitions on the ground floor and

UNV Torsten Swoboda (left) teaching Kyzyl Oi village women about potato farming.

Building livelihoods with micro-credit

NOTEBOOK

BEING THERE

VV

STEVEN CHEEK '77

DEMOCRACY AND POVERTY: ARE THEY INTERLINKED?

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NOBEL LAUREATE EXPLORES THE DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY

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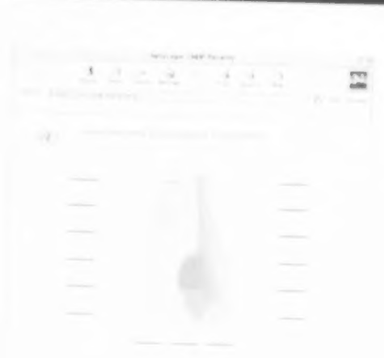

DEVELOPMENT AS FREEDOM

AMARTYA SEN

Available from: Alfred A. Knopf, New York, September 1999
Number of pages: 66
Price: US$27.50 plus $5.00 for shipping and handling
ISBN No. 0375406190
Website: www.randomhouse.com

A GATEWAY TO INFORMATION ON POVERTY

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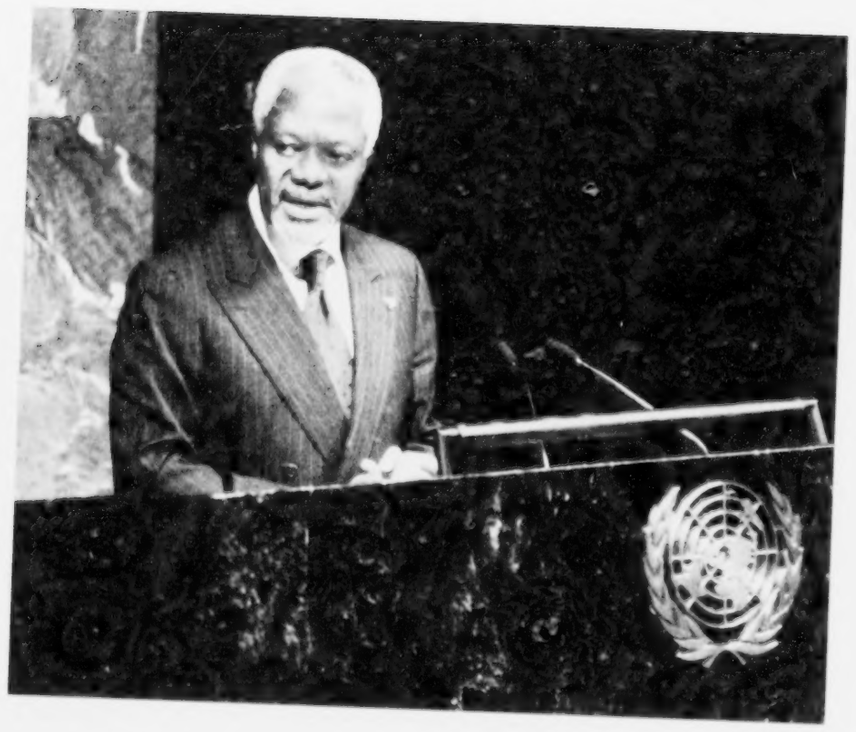
FACING THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEW CENTURY



MATTERS OF FACT

Information is drawn from the *Human Development Report 2000*, commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme. The report is published in English by Oxford University Press, and in 13 other language editions by a variety of publishers.

Human Rights. In the last 25 years multiparty electoral systems were introduced in more than 115 countries. In 1900, no country had universal adult suffrage. Today nearly all countries do. However, women occupy only 14% of parliamentary seats. Of the 120 national parliaments today, 50% have formal bodies dealing with human rights. About 1.2 million women and girls under 18 are trafficked for prostitution each year. Between 85 and 115 million girls and women have undergone some form of female genital mutilation. Around the world on average, one in three women have been subjected to violence in an intimate relationship. 3 In the last decade there have been about 300,000 child soldiers. Six million children were injured in armed conflicts. There are about 250 million child labourers worldwide—Asia accounts for 153 million and Africa for 80 million. About a third of children under five suffer from malnutrition. The genocidal civil war in Rwanda, in 1994, was responsible for one million deaths. The 1991-1995, Serb-Muslim war in Bosnia and Herzegovina killed between 150,000-250,000 people. 3 Nearly 90 journalists and media people were killed while doing their jobs in 1999. In Cambodia, 25,000 teachers have been trained in human rights and have taught more than three million children. Today, at least 22 countries have incorprated children's rights in their constitutions.

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